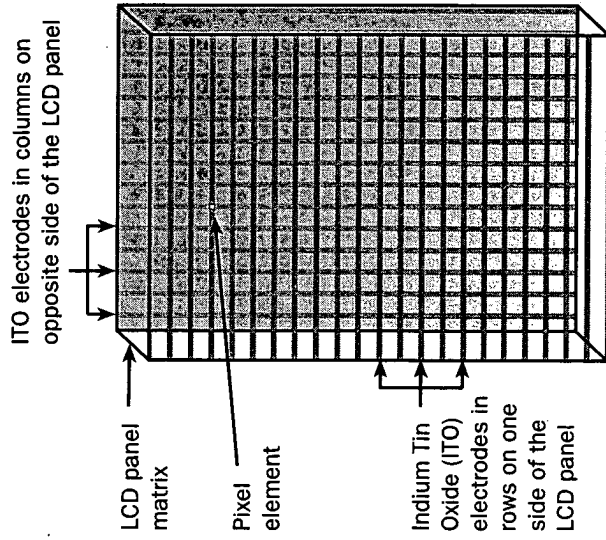


on, unlike active-matrix displays. However, computers with passive-matrix displays are considerably cheaper than those with active-matrix screens. See the illustration. *Also called* dual-scan display. *See also* liquid crystal display, supertwist display, transistor, twisted nematic display. *Compare* active-matrix display.



Passive-matrix display.

passive node *n.* A network node that "listens" for transmissions but is not actively involved in passing them along the network; typical of a node on a bus network. *See also* bus network, node (definition 2).

pass-through *adj.* 1. In general, a reference to something that acts as an intermediary between other entities. For example, a pass-through proxy server allows external access to an internal (protected) server by passing requests from the requesting client to the server without allowing direct access. 2. Pertaining to a device or connector that moves a signal or set of signals from the input to the output without making any changes. For example, a peripheral device such as a SCSI adapter might have a pass-through parallel I/O port for connecting a printer through the same connector.

password *n.* The string of characters entered by a user to verify his or her identity to the network. The system compares the code against a stored list of author-

ized passwords and users. If the code is legitimate, the system allows the user access at whatever security level has been approved for the owner of the password. Ideally a password is a combination of text, numbers, and punctuation or other characters that cannot be guessed at or easily cracked by intruders.

Password Authentication Protocol *n.* *See* PAP (definition 1).

password protection *n.* The use of passwords as a means of allowing only authorized users access to a computer system or its files.

paste *vb.* To insert text or a graphic that has been cut or copied from one document into a different location in the same or a different document. *See also* cut, cut and paste.

patch¹ *n.* A piece of object code that is inserted in an executable program as a temporary fix for a bug.

patch² *vb.* In programming, to repair a deficiency in the functionality of an existing routine or program, generally in response to an unforeseen need or set of operating circumstances. Patching is a common means of adding a feature or a function to a program until the next version of the software is released.

Compare hack (definition 2), kludge (definition 2).

path *n.* 1. In communications, a link between two nodes in a network. 2. A route through a structured collection of information, as in a database, a program, or files stored on disk. 3. In programming, the sequence of instructions a computer carries out in executing a routine. 4. In information processing, such as the theory underlying expert (deductive) systems, a logical course through the branches of a tree of inferences leading to a conclusion. 5. In file storage, the route followed by the operating system through the directories in finding, sorting, and retrieving files on a disk. 6. In graphics, an accumulation of line segments or curves to be filled or drawn.

path menu *n.* In windowed environments, the menu or drop box used to enter the universal naming convention path to a shared network resource.

pathname *n.* In a hierarchical filing system, a listing of the directories or folders that lead from the current directory to a file. *Also called* directory path.

pattern recognition *n.* 1. A broad technology describing the ability of a computer to identify patterns. The term usually refers to computer recognition of visual images or sound patterns that have been converted to

arrays of numbers. 2. The recognition of purely mathematical or textual patterns.

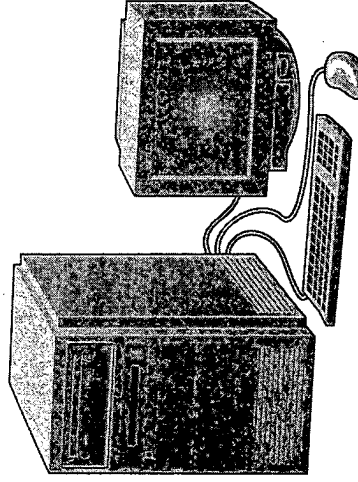
Pause key *n.* 1. A key on a keyboard that temporarily stops the operation of a program or a command. The Pause key is used, for example, to halt scrolling so that a multiscreen listing or document can be read. 2. Any key that creates a pause in an operation. For example, many game programs have a Pause key, often simply the P key, that temporarily suspends the game.

PB *n.* *See* petabyte.

PB SRAM \P-B S'ram\ *n.* *See* pipeline burst static RAM.

PBX *n.* Acronym for Private Branch Exchange. An automatic telephone switching system that enables users within an organization to place calls to each other without going through the public telephone network. Users can also place calls to outside numbers.

PC *n.* 1. A microcomputer that conforms to the standard developed by IBM for personal computers, which uses a microprocessor in the Intel 80x86 family (or compatible) and can execute the BIOS. *See* the illustration. *See also* 8086, BIOS, clone, IBM PC. 2. A computer in IBM's Personal Computer line. *Also called* IBM PC. *See also* PC-compatible (definition 1). *See* personal computer.



PC.

PCB *n.* *See* printed circuit board.

PC board *n.* *See* printed circuit board.

PC Card *n.* A add-in card that conforms to the PCMCIA specification. A PC Card is a removable device, approximately the same size as a credit card, that is designed to plug into a PCMCIA slot. Release 1 of the PCMCIA specification, introduced

PUBLISHED BY
Microsoft Press
A Division of Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Microsoft Computer Dictionary. -- 4th ed.

p. cm.

Previous eds. published under title: Microsoft Press computer dictionary

ISBN 0-7394-0880-1

1. Computers Dictionaries. 2. Microcomputers Dictionaries.
I. Microsoft Press computer dictionary.

QA76.15.M538 1999

004'.03--dc21

99-20168
CIP

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 MLML 4 3 2 1 0 9

Distributed in Canada by Penguin Books Canada Limited.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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